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time (*Memphis Eagle*, April 23, 1845; *Charleston Courier*, April 29, 1845). On page 228 we are startled by the remark that Palmerston did not even "consider" the "possibility" of the annexation of Texas to the United States. In fact he intimated to the envoy of that country that, if she were going to join the American Union, an acknowledgment of her independence was unnecessary (Worley, in *Tex. Hist. Assoc. Quarterly*, IX. 4); and our minister to England reported (no. 4) on August 6, 1836, that the probability of the annexation of Texas was already perceived there (State Dept., Desps. from Mins., England, XLIV.). The author shows great freedom in imputing intentions to statesmen. On page 182 are two of these ascriptions, one of them labelled "undoubtedly" and the other "unquestionably", neither of which the reviewer can accept; and, in general, positiveness in presenting such inferences or conjectures appears a little out of place in a book described in its preface as "purely technical". The author's views regarding Elliot, the feeling of the northern Mexicans towards Texas, the reasons why Great Britain opposed our annexing that country, "Aberdeen's withdrawal from joint action with France", and several other matters, deserve an examination for which there is no space here. The foot-notes leave something to be desired. References that would be welcome are in numerous instances wanting; and despatches, though sometimes as many as eight or ten addressed to the same person bear the same date, are very seldom cited by number. A chapter on the annexation of California and an index of less than three pages conclude the volume.

JUSTIN H. SMITH.

*Charles Sumner.* By GEORGE H. HAYNES, Ph.D., Professor of History in the Worcester Polytechnic Institute. [*American Crisis Biographies.*] (Philadelphia: George W. Jacobs and Company. 1910. Pp. 469.)

THE series of *Crisis Biographies* would have been incomplete without a volume on Charles Sumner. This circumstance rather than any original inspiration seems to have called forth this new life of the Massachusetts statesman. It does not appear that the biographer has approached his task with any new material or with any new interpretation of Sumner's career. New material, indeed, could hardly be expected in view of the monumental work which Pierce erected to the memory of his hero. To the biographer of a later generation there are advantages and disadvantages in the pre-existence of a Boswell. While Professor Haynes has assembled his material carefully and has written a clear, readable narrative, he is nevertheless very much under the spell of Sumner's compelling personality. Sharing Sumner's hatred of the "barbarism of slavery" and predicating "inevitable" to the revolution which emancipated the slave, the biographer conceives Sumner in the rôle of

prophet in quite the old Hebrew sense. Even while conceding that Sumner was often doctrinaire and intemperate in speech, he cannot withhold admiration for this "pioneer of agitation" whose mission it was to assail public injustice. What escapes the biographer is the ignorance of Sumner respecting the actual institution of slavery. Pierce is authority for the statement that in 1855, while on a visit to Lexington, Kentucky, Sumner for the first and only time in his life inspected the condition of slaves on a plantation. His host on that occasion testifies that Sumner was surprised at the comfort and contentment of the blacks. Yet shortly after this incident Sumner wrote solemnly, "the more I think and see of slavery, the more indefensible does it seem." What offended Sumner's conscience was slavery in the abstract. In all that he said and wrote upon slavery there is not a glimmer of insight into the nature of the race problem which underlay slavery; yet had he possessed the teachableness of real wisdom, he might have learned much from his friend Agassiz who saw to the heart of the problem.

The defects of Sumner's statesmanship were most conspicuous after the Civil War, when unluckily his influence was greatest. Professor Haynes recognizes that the work of reconstruction called for talent of a different order from that needed to correct an abuse. "Sumner", he writes discriminately, "had entered political life at the top, undisciplined by the struggles through which alone most men reach that eminence. He had singularly little experience in the adaptation of legislation to constructive ends and none at all in the practical work of carrying laws into effect in government." From first to last Sumner was what Theodore Parker declared he would be, a senator with a conscience. But the inner voices which spoke to him led him into strange inconsistencies. He declaimed against war, yet with fatuous disregard of the effect of his language he contributed in no small measure to bring on fratricidal war by his intemperate assaults upon the social order of the South; he sought civil and political equality for the freedman, but he could not be just to those disfranchised Southern leaders without whose co-operation the bestowal of the ballot upon the negro became a hollow mockery; trained as a jurist, he could yet in his zeal for humanitarian ends declare that "anything for human rights is constitutional."

The actual influence of Sumner as a national statesman cannot be measured by his effective appeals to the New England conscience. Professor Haynes has not demonstrated that Sumner with all his grandiose eloquence hastened Emancipation; and he has not emphasized sufficiently that after the war Sumner played, albeit unconsciously, into the hands of politicians who were utilizing forces which he neither evoked nor effectively controlled.

ALLEN JOHNSON.